perplexity

Chuck Smith's Relationship to Paul Cain and Paul Cain's Homosexuality

Early Ministry Relationship (Late 1950s)

Chuck Smith, who founded Calvary Chapel and became one of the most influential figures in modern American Christianity, worked closely with Paul Cain during the healing revival movement of the late 1950s. According to multiple sources, Smith served as both **worship leader and campaign manager** for Cain's healing evangelism crusades when Cain was conducting large tent meetings.[1] [2] [3]

In a recorded interview, Paul Cain himself described this relationship in detail. He stated that Smith was a "supply pastor" for the First Foursquare Church in Phoenix and became one of the sponsors of Cain's meetings at what was called "Madison Square Garden" in Phoenix (actually a wrestling/sports arena). Cain recalled that Smith "was my worship leader" and then "became my campaign manager," setting up meetings for him. He also remembered Smith as "the best of friends" and described fishing trips together at Roosevelt Lake in Arizona, where Smith would make "the best baked beans in the world". Cain even mentioned receiving a letter from Smith inviting him to California for deep-sea fishing and to hold meetings at Smith's church.[4]

During this period, Smith was still deeply involved in the Pentecostal Foursquare denomination and was strongly supportive of Cain's prophetic and healing ministry. According to Cain, Smith would "chide" him, saying "Paul, if you don't use your gifts for the church more than what's being taken away from you, it's going to punish you," reflecting Smith's concern that Cain should remain more engaged with organized church ministry.[4]

Later Confrontation and Apology

The relationship between Smith and Cain took a significant turn decades later. According to Phoenix Preacher, a Christian blog that documented Calvary Chapel controversies, there was a later incident where **Cain confronted Smith for telling someone that Paul was a homosexual** (which Cain denied at that time). A witness who was present during this confrontation reported: "I was with Chuck when Paul Cain came to confront Chuck for telling someone that Paul was a homosexual (which at that time Paul denied.) Chuck was very gracious and apologized to Paul and prayed with him".[5]

This account suggests that Smith had concerns about or knowledge of Cain's sexual behavior earlier than the public exposure in 2004, though the exact timing of this confrontation is unclear. The witness characterized Smith as "very gracious" and noted that he "never wanted to stand in the way of someone else being used by God. Especially 'anointed' people".[5]

Paul Cain's Homosexuality: The Public Exposure

2004 Confrontation

In **April 2004**, three prominent charismatic leaders—**Rick Joyner, Mike Bickle, and Jack Deere**—confronted Paul Cain with evidence of homosexual activity and alcoholism. They had been made aware in February 2004 that Cain had become an alcoholic, and subsequently learned of his involvement in homosexual relationships.[6] [7] [8]

According to Jack Deere, he learned of the charges from **a man who said he had been involved in a sexual relationship with Cain**. Three witnesses also confirmed to *Charisma* magazine that Cain drank heavily, with the drinking becoming so serious that "Cain once collapsed in public".[6]

When initially confronted at a meeting in Moravian Falls, North Carolina, Cain **admitted to the charges**. However, he later retracted his confession and sent out letters from doctors vouching for his emotional health, denying the allegations on his own website.[6]

Public Statement (October 2004)

On **October 19, 2004**, after Cain resisted the restoration process and continued in his sinful behavior, Joyner, Bickle, and Deere released a public statement. They wrote: "In February 2004, we were made aware that Paul had become an alcoholic. In April 2004, we confronted Paul with evidence that he had recently been involved in homosexual activity. Paul admitted to these sinful practices and was placed under discipline, agreeing to a process of restoration which the three of us would oversee. However, Paul has resisted this process and has continued in his sin".[9] [8] [10]

The three ministers emphasized they were following the biblical process outlined in Matthew 18:15-17, and apologized "to the body of Christ for our lack of discernment in promoting Paul's ministry while he had these significant strongholds in his life".[8] [9]

Cain's Public Confession (February 2005)

After months of denial, Paul Cain issued a **public apology on January 31, 2005** (published in February 2005), which appeared in *Charisma* magazine. In his confession, Cain stated:

"I have struggled with homosexuality for an extended period of time. I have struggled with alcoholism for an extended period of time. I apologize for denying these matters of truth, rather than readily admitting them. I am ashamed of what I have done to hurt those close to me and for the pain I have caused those who have believed in my ministry".[7] [11] [6]

He told *Charisma*: **"I am as guilty as I can be. I am going for counseling. I am getting as much help as I can"**.[11] [6]

The Celibacy Claim

One of the most troubling aspects of Cain's deception was his **public claims of celibacy**. For decades, Cain had maintained that he possessed a "gift of celibacy" and had been "touched by the Lord" in such a way that he had no sexual feelings. According to his own promotional materials, following an angelic visitation, he understood "the Lord was calling him to celibacy," with the Lord allegedly saying, "I walked alone, and so must you, if you want to realize my highest purposes for your life".[12] [13]

Rick Joyner later noted that Cain would make statements in public meetings claiming he was "living a celibate life" even after he had been caught for homosexual behavior. This suggests that Cain's deception was not merely private struggle but involved **active misrepresentation** of his spiritual life and moral condition to congregations and the broader Christian community.[14]

Subsequent Denial and Continued Controversy

Disturbingly, **two years after his 2005 confession, Cain denied the confession**. Jack Deere reported that Cain "made full confession to *Charisma* Magazine in 2005 when he was seventy-five years old. Then, two years later, he denied the confession. He had found someone he could control 'to restore' him. He claimed restoration, but he never returned to prominence in the body of Christ".[15]

Deere also described Cain's behavior during this period as manipulative and aggressive: "He told the grossest lies about anyone who refused to proclaim his innocence. He threatened all of his former ministerial friends...with ruin when they would not excuse his sin". Deere added, "I never saw him show any sorrow over sin. I never saw him repent of any sin".[15]

Historical Context and Impact

Paul Cain's ministry had been influential in the charismatic movement, particularly through his association with the **Kansas City Prophets** in the late 1980s and his promotion by John Wimber of the Vineyard movement. His prophetic gift was considered extraordinary, with the ability to call out people from audiences and provide detailed information about their lives.[2] [16] [17] [6]

The exposure of Cain's long-term homosexual activity and alcoholism raised serious questions about discernment within charismatic leadership. Rick Joyner acknowledged: "I think our basic mistake was to overlook a lot of serious and obvious warning signs". Jack Deere similarly stated: "We all have preached that you never put gifting over character, but that is what we did for Paul. We would have fired anyone else. The reason we didn't is because of [Cain's] gifting. We let that gifting excuse character".[6]

Paul Cain died on **February 12, 2019**, at age 89. His legacy remains deeply controversial, with debates continuing about whether his prophetic gift was genuine despite his moral failures, or whether his entire ministry was compromised by deception.[18] [19] [20]

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